

## EMNAMBITHI LADYSMITH MUNICIPALITY

### EMPLOYEE WELLNESS PROGRAMME

#### STATEMENT OF THE POLICY

The Council recognizes that any personal problem can and do affect workers job performance/behavior.

As a result of the above, the Council provides an Employee Wellness Programme, which is a confidential assistance/advisory service, designed to assist employees in dealing with their problems.

Such problems may include personal, psychological, marital, substance dependency or work related problems, which definitely and repeatedly interfere with the employees' health and or productivity.

The Employee Wellness Programme is available to all employees of the Council and persons experiencing problems are encouraged to seek advice from their Employee Wellness Programme Co-ordinator.

The programme is further aimed at assisting Management to improve or restore impaired job performance.

CONFIDENTIALITY of all records will be strictly preserved.

Participation in this programme is voluntary and utilization of the programme will not jeopardize the employee's promotional opportunities, job security or disciplinary process.

Diagnosis of an employee's personal problem (s) is not part of the Supervisor's or Manager's job function. Therefore referral for diagnosis and treatment will be based only on job performance/behavior.

7. The employee has a right to refuse referral to the EAP. However, such cases can be referred to Manager Corporate Services to arrange a focus discussion.

#### EMPLOYEE WELLNESS PROGRAMME

##### 1. PREAMBLE

The Emnambithi/Ladysmith Municipality cares about the health and social well-being of its employees and recognizes that there are a number of personal problems which impact negatively to the employee's personal and work lives.

The Emnambithi/Ladysmith Municipality realizes

that an Employee Wellness Programme is not simply a humanitarian way of resolving personal problems so that they do not impede job performance but it's a programme which also makes excellent financial sense by reducing absenteeism, sick leave, accident benefits, early retirement, time spent on disciplinary matters, employee replacement cost etc.

The Emnambithi Ladysmith Municipality therefore commits itself to ensuring that workers are provided with assistance in their problems to restore the employees to full productivity.

##### 2. OBJECTIVES

To provide assistance in the form of confidential counseling and referral, to every employee who experiences personal as well as work related problems.

To ensure productivity and quality of life to its employees while taking into consideration the employees families and relatives.

To provide employees with preventative education and skills training.

Council to take care of its employees by providing aftercare and follow-ups.

### 3. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

LRA 66 of 1995  
BCEA 75 of 1997  
OHSA – 55 of 1998  
Compensation for Occupational Disease Act 30 of 1993.  
Medical Schemes Act.  
Promotion of equality of prevention of unfair Discrimination Act No 4 of 2000.

### 4. SCOPE OF AVAILABILITY

The provision of this policy shall apply to all employees, prospective employees, contracts and Councillors of the Emnambithi/Ladysmith Municipality.

### 5. PRINCIPLES

#### 5.1 ACCESSIBILITY

Council shall ensure that the programme is accessible to all its employees regardless of their positions.

Council commits itself to developing a system of resources relevant and accessible to employees and their families (for instance counseling).

#### 5.2 CONFIDENTIALITY ON CONSULTATION

Council shall:-

Ensure confidentiality of information/details revealed by employees during consultation.

Neither victimize nor dismiss an employee on the basis of information revealed during consultation or while receiving treatment.

#### 5.3 NEUTRALITY

Council shall ensure that EAP information remains outside of traditional conflict areas between Management and Employee Organization e.g. not to testify in any labour disciplinary proceeding.

EAP will be acknowledged as highlighting common interest between management and labour.

EAP shall not be used as a disciplinary tool for management.

#### 5.4 VOLUNTARISM

Council acknowledges that most effective referral to the programme is a self-referral since it achieves the earliest intervention possible.

At no stage can an affected employee be forced to use the programme.

The EAP does not exist to moralize the employee co-operation but to assist employees fulfill contractual obligations.

#### 5.5 CONSTRUCTIVE COERCION

After all interventions have been executed i.e. training and development, the Manager/Supervisor can persuade the affected employee to seek assistance from EAP.

## 5.6 PERMANANCY

Council shall ensure the survival and sustainability of the EAP by providing visible support.

Council shall ensure thorough advocacy through consultation with all stakeholders including labour organizations.

## 5.7 GUARANTEES

This policy guarantees that: -

An employee identified as having personal problems shall not be discriminated against in respect of benefits such as promotions, training and others.

Special leave will be granted to accommodate assistance based on merit subject to management approval.

Confidentiality will be respected in terms of giving feedback to referring supervisors.

Supervisors may only obtain a progress prognosis report (Not diagnosis)

EAP does not replace disciplinary procedures but provides an alternative method of managing poor performance.

Counseling is an in-house service rendered by qualified EAP Practitioners.

Terminally ill employees are covered in line with existing council policy.

## 6. TYPES OF REFERRALS

### 6.1 SELF REFERRAL

An employee through a process of self-realization recognizes that a problem exists, may seek assistance by EAP Co-ordinator directly or through their Supervisors/Managers.

A self-referral EAP consent form will be available for an individual to sign.

Self-referrals will be treated with strict confidentiality.

Employees, who voluntarily seek assistance but do not want their supervisors to know of their participation, can arrange appointment with the Co-Ordinator outside hours of duty.

Such arrangements will be subject to EAP Co-ordinator's commitment.

### 6.2 FORMAL REFERRAL

A supervisor who is concerned about the decline in an employee's performance, attitude or and behavior may refer that employee, with the employee's consent form to an EAP co-ordinator for assistance.

The Supervisor is required to complete the referral form and submit it to EAP Co-ordinator at least three days prior to the interview.

The employee has a right to refuse the co-ordinator's recommendations regarding treatment/counseling.

The supervisor/Manager will not require the employee to divulge the nature of the personal problem but will merely offer assistance in arranging an appointment at a time convenient to all parties.

### 6.3 INFORMAL REFERRAL

This is when an employee experiences personal or social problems and on advice of other people e.g. supervisor, a colleague, union representative, friend or family may seek assistance from the EAP practitioner.

Self-referral consent form will be available for an individual to sign.

The supervisor/manager will not require the employee to divulge the nature of the personal problem but will merely offer assistance in arranging an appointment at time convenient to all parties.

The EAP Co-ordinator will be responsible for -

In forming the supervisor/manager of the progress on counseling.

In forming the supervisor/manager of the time an employee will be required to be released from normal duty in order to receive assistance.

That no information regarding the precise nature of the employee's personal problem(s) will be revealed to supervisor/manager without the Employee's informed agreement.

EAP clients absent from work due to EAP related procedures be allowed special leave.

### 7. DISCONTINUANCE OF TREATMENT

7.1 Should an employee decide to discontinue the recommended treatment or counseling programme, he or she must inform the EAP Co-ordinator of this.

### 8. DEFAULT IN TREATMENT

8.1 Should the helping agency suspend or expel the employee from its treatment or counseling programme, the EAP Co-ordinator will inform the employee and manager of the department

### 9. PAYMENT

9.1 In the case of substance abuse, should an employee who is not a member of the Medical Aid Scheme be required to undergo treatment at an appropriate institution/organization, the Council will be responsible for payment subject to approval by the Municipal Manager.

9.2 In all other instances, where a Medical Aid Scheme covers illnesses or conditions employees will be required to submit claims in the normal way. Should the Medical Aid Scheme fail to cover the full treatment cost then the Council will be responsible for the shortfall in respect of the first complete treatment.

### 10. RELAPSE

10.1 Should it become apparent that a relapse has occurred, a second course of treatment or counseling will be granted subject to the approval of the Municipal Manager.

11. Council will provide opportunities for all of its employees to be educated and informed of the

hazard of alcohol and substance abuse.

## 12. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Employee Wellness Programme shall be monitored continuously. It shall be evaluated annually if necessary by EAP Co-ordinator, Advisory Committee and report be submitted to all stakeholders within the Council.

## 13. POLICY REVIEW

The policy must, by necessity, be reviewed on annual basis jointly by all stakeholders, in cognizance of continuous evolution and changing developments regarding the programme.

## RESPONSIBILITY

- All employees shall be held responsible and accountable for complying with this policy.
- All managers must ensure that all members of staff are aware of and understand the content of the EAP policy.
- All managers must ensure that each employee receives this policy.
- All managers are responsible for implementing this policy.
- The management Corporate Services is responsible for ensuring that this policy is properly distributed to all departments and that every employee has personally received a copy.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS:

### EMPLOYEE WELLNESS PROGRAMME (EAP)

This is a work site based programme, designed to assist employees in the identification and resolution of performance and behavioral problems associated with employees hampered by personal problems.

#### PERSONAL PROBLEMS:

Include but not limited to: marital, family, emotional, health, financial, legal, substance abuse, life threatening illnesses, unforeseen circumstances.

These adversely impact upon their health as well as productivity.

#### EAP CO-ORDINATOR

A person skilled to render the necessary intervention to a affected employee.

#### AFFECTED EMPLOYEE

An employee whose job performance/ behavior is not up to required standard.

#### REFER

Directing an affected employee to the EAP Co-ordinator and or institution for assistance.

#### INSTITUTION/ ORGANIZATION

Authorized service centers that intervene in a case of an affected employee e.g. Hospital/ Clinic, Social Welfare, South African National Council for Alcoholism, Hospice FAMSA and others.

#### INTERVENTION:

Treatment or counseling by EAP Co-ordinator/ Psychiatrist/ Doctor/ Social Worker

#### DEFAULT:

Failure to act, honor an appointment or take prescribe treatment.

#### RELAPSE:

Deterioration in client's condition after partial recovery

#### CLIENT

An affected person seeking help for EAP

#### NEUTRALITY

Maintaining impartial state

#### VOLUNTARISM

Self initiated referral

#### ACCESSIBLE:

Easily reachable

#### PERMANANCY:

Long lasting

#### CONSTRUCTIVE COERSION:

Persuasion of an affected employee by the supervisor to consult EAP

#### CONSULTATION:

Seeking information/ advice from EAP Co-ordinator, institution or doctor

#### PROGNOSIS:

Forecast of course of illness

CONFIDENTIAL

EMPLOYEE WELLNESS PROGRAMME

CONSENT TO BE REFERRED TO THE EAP CO-ORDINATOR

I \_\_\_\_\_ (name in full), pay number \_\_\_\_\_ agree/  
disagree to utilize EAP services and fully understand that I am not obligated accept the recommendation of  
the EAP Co-ordinator.

Supervisor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

CONFIDENTIAL

EMPLOYEE WELLNESS PROGRAMME

CONSENT TO UTILIZE THE EAP SERVICE

I \_\_\_\_\_ (name in full), pay number \_\_\_\_\_ agree/ disagree to utilize the EAP services and fully understand that I am not obligated to accept the recommendation of the EAP Co-ordinator.

Should I default in or discontinue treatment or counseling programme, and then the supervisor will be informed.

EAP Co-Ordinator: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_





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